

THE
INAUGURAL ADDRESS
OF
HIS HONOR FRED. W. LINCOLN, JR.
MAYOR OF THE CITY OF BOSTON,
TO THE CITY COUNCIL,

JANUARY 4, 1858.



BOSTON:
GEO. C. RAND & AVERY, CITY PRINTERS,
No. 3, CORNHILL.
1858.

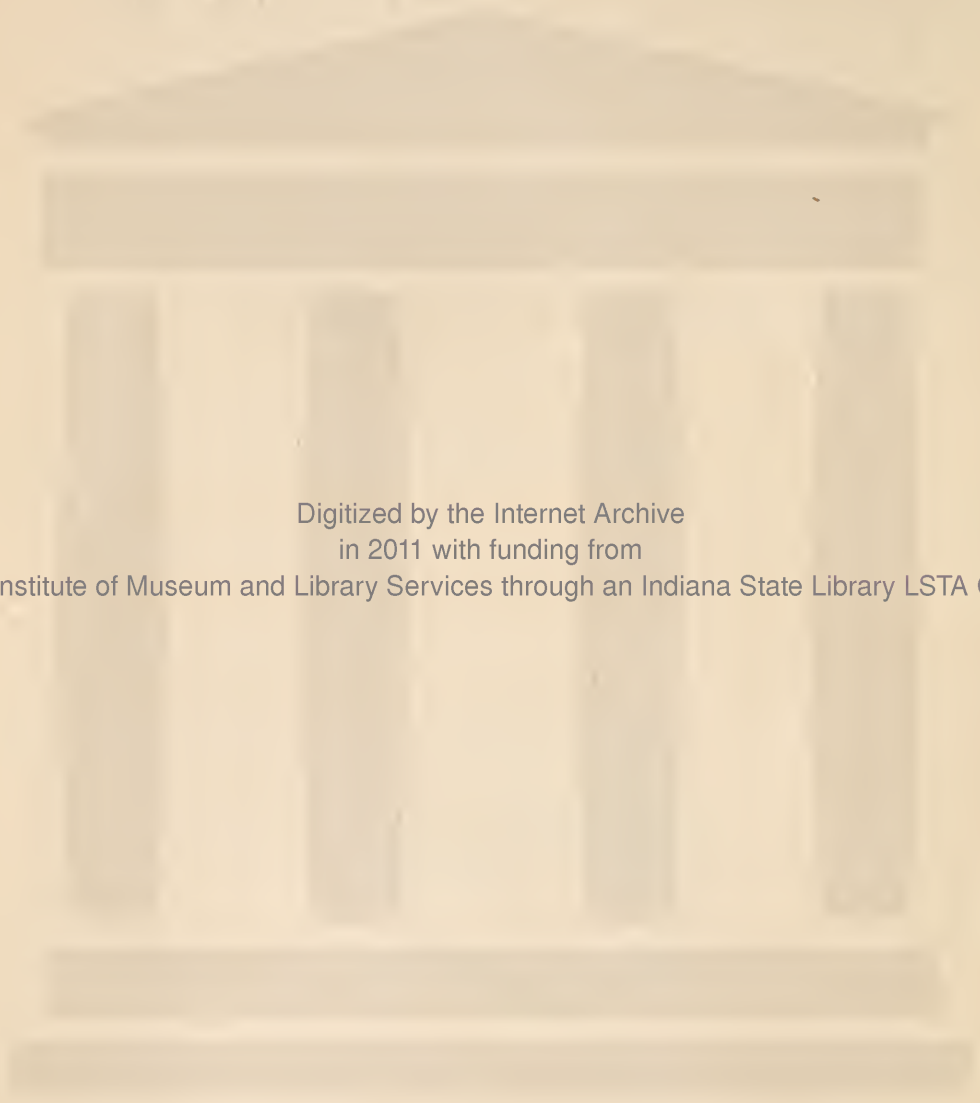
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CITY OF BOSTON.

In Common Council, January 4, 1858.

ORDERED, That His Honor the Mayor be requested to furnish a copy of his Address, that the same may be printed.

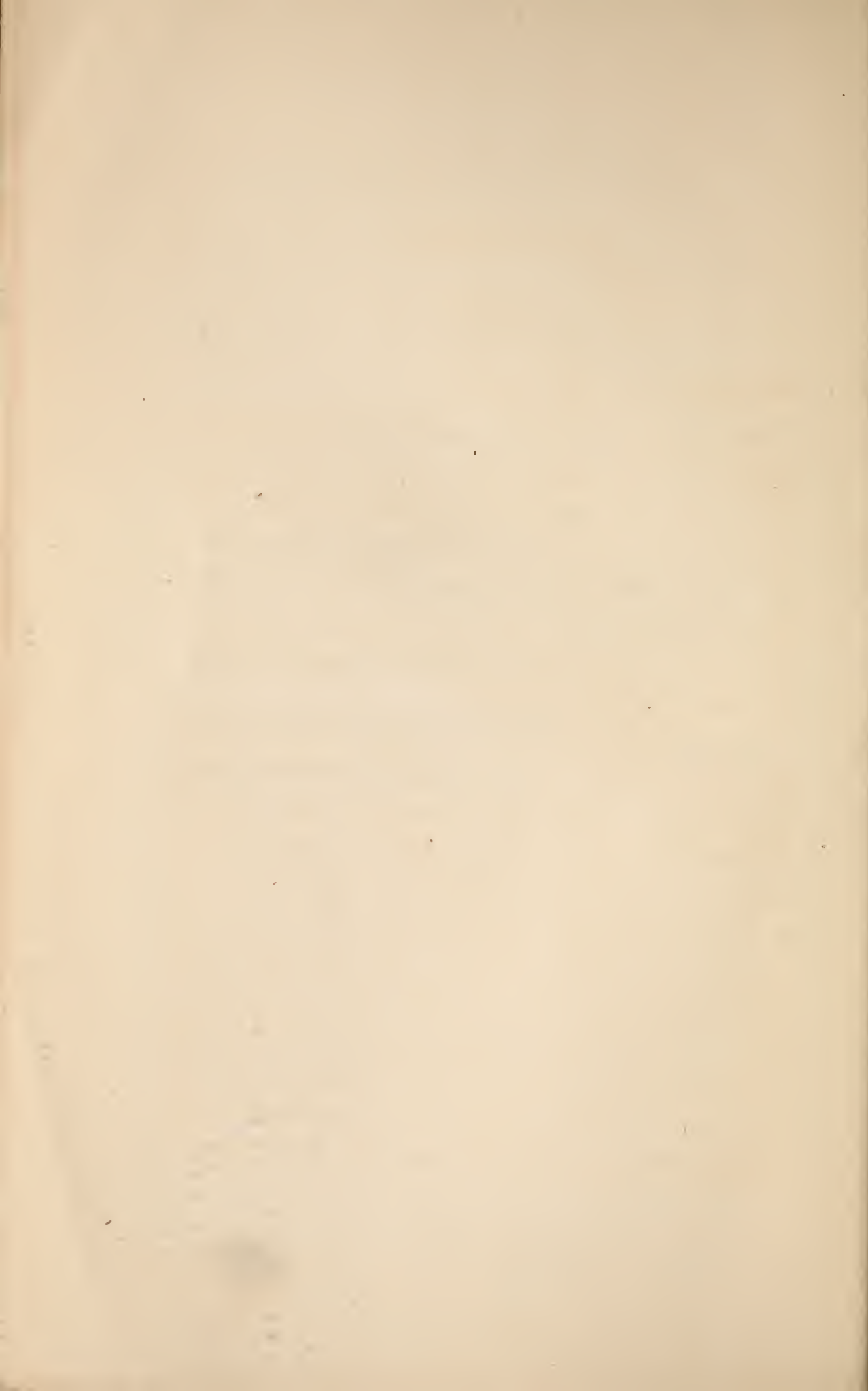
Sent up for concurrence.

SAMUEL W. WALDRON, Jr., *President.*

In Board of Aldermen, January 4, 1858.

Concurred.

JOSEPH M. WIGHTMAN, *Chairman.*



A D D R E S S .

GENTLEMEN OF THE CITY COUNCIL :

We have assembled this morning under the happiest auspices to inaugurate a new administration for the control and government of our municipal affairs. We have been selected and set apart by our fellow-citizens for the performance of certain specified duties, the faithful discharge of which will redound to our own honor, and promote the comfort and happiness of the community in which we live.

These official trusts are not of that character which fire the ambition of those who aspire to political fame, but they are none the less honorable on that account. It is not our fortune to act a conspicuous part in public affairs or to wield the destinies of nations, but to contribute in an humble way to the safety of persons and property immediately about us. We are to aid in the quiet, unobtrusive duties of common life ; to exercise a direct influence upon financial prosperity and individual comfort ; to provide by our appropriations for the education of the young, and the sustenance of the worthy poor ; to furnish the means for the security of

our dwellings from the rage of the elements and the crimes of lawless men; to promote Christian morality and social order; in short, all those instrumentalities which make a people happy, or add to the enjoyments of our loved ones at home, are within the sphere of our authority, demanding our utmost exertions and zealous care.

Our natural geographical position is of the highest order in the relative rank of cities. Bordering on the Atlantic, the great maritime highway of the world, we have a harbor unsurpassed in its conveniences, connecting us by our foreign commerce with all nations, while upon all other sides we are surrounded in the immediate vicinity by a belt of flourishing cities and towns, and through the system of internal improvements which centre here, we are linked with that great West which is developing so rapidly its wonderful physical resources.

Our people, when we take into consideration their number, are singularly homogeneous in character. The influence of Boston has always been on the side of loyalty to law, sound morality, and the highest Christian civilization. The old stock and blood, which in the early colonial times and during the struggles of the revolutionary era gave it its historical renown, is still with us, improved and invigorated year by year by those fresh and earnest spirits who, coming from the more quiet sections of our country, here find a field

for the exercise of their talents, and are instrumental in giving to the city that love of enterprise and intellectual activity which have made our metropolitan life so distinctive and peculiar in its character.

The pecuniary pressure and panic which have lately affected the whole business world, have had an influence upon us, as upon every other commercial and manufacturing community; but it has only served to show how solid were the elements of our prosperity; and though fortunes may have vanished and disappeared, yet the great mass of our business men still retain unimpaired their high character for integrity and moral worth.

Our population has gone through this crisis without any breach of the public peace, or the least symptom of turbulent feeling. If deprived of work, idleness did not breed discontent, or show itself in any excited action against institutions or individuals. Forced by the proceedings of the banking institutions of a sister city, our own banks, as a matter of self-defence, suspended specie payments; but no confusion followed, their bills passed with equal currency from hand to hand, and confidence in their soundness was never for a moment lost.

We enter upon a new year with brighter prospects, profiting, it is hoped, by the experience of the past, and looking forward to the time, not far distant, when

all classes will again be engaged with renewed vigor in the various channels of trade and industrial effort.

The charitable, philanthropic and literary institutions, whether supported at the public charge or by private munificence, which have done so much for the material comfort and mental training of our inhabitants at home, and the credit and reputation of our city abroad, are as prosperous now as at any previous period in our history; health and peace reign within our borders, and never before had we greater cause for gratitude to the Giver of all good, or could we more truly exclaim, in the words of the inspired writer, "our lines have fallen in pleasant places; yea, we have a goodly heritage."

Having thus briefly alluded to the position of our city and the character of its inhabitants, custom and the proprieties of the occasion require that I should make a few suggestions in regard to some of those subjects which will engage our attention during the coming year.

It would be presumption in me, however, to go into details, or make any elaborate remarks upon topics with which a portion of you are already much better acquainted than myself. The good people of our city, with more unanimity than is usually exhibited in a sharply contested election, have by the return of so many members of the last government signified their approval of its leading measures. Many of these

measures are but partially completed, and it will be our duty to carry them forward in accordance with the original designs.

There are other subjects of equal importance which have already received the attention of the last Board, but without any definite action on their part. These will require patient investigation and the calmest judgment which can be brought to their consideration.

Pardon me if I make the suggestion that this is not the time, nor does the exigency of the public service require, that any new schemes should be entertained for the expenditure of the public money. We must, of course, keep up with the progress of the age, the increase of our population, the expansion of business relations, and the natural development of our resources; but in a season of pecuniary embarrassment like that through which our citizens are now passing, when there is a general complaint of the high rate of taxation, it becomes us, their servants, to pause, and to incur no expense but such as the actual necessities of the city require. So far as we can understand the sentiments of our constituents, they do not expect any radical change of measures, or the inauguration of any new system for the conduct of our municipal affairs. If abuses are found to exist, they are to be speedily remedied; if incompetent men are holding official trusts, they are to be at once removed. It should be our endeavor to make as harmonious and efficient an

administration as the circumstances of the case will permit. The right man at every post, knowing but one thing — his duty — and doing that regardless of personal consequences.

The short time that has elapsed since I was so unexpectedly called, by the suffrages of my fellow-citizens, to assume the position which I occupy, has not afforded me the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the several departments of the public service, or given me the assurance to commit myself at this time to the recommendation of any specific measures for the public welfare. Honest and well-meaning men often press with much pertinacity a darling project, which to them seems of vital importance, but which would lose its relative value, even to themselves, were they placed in a position where other great interests were also to be considered. This, I confess, is my situation. I have opinions, decided opinions, upon many matters affecting the city's interests; but I shall not act upon them, in my official capacity, until I gain that light which such a position naturally furnishes.

The heads of the several departments and important committees of the last Council have kindly furnished me with information upon the various matters under their care; but I shall not trespass upon your time by their rehearsal, as you will soon be in possession of more full and complete knowledge from the annual reports, some of which have already been made, and

others are to be immediately submitted on the commencement of the official year.

It is enough for me to say, at this time, that I think our citizens will be exceedingly gratified by the state of affairs which they will present, and that generally it will be found that the confidence which was placed in our immediate predecessors has not been forfeited, or the powers delegated to them been used in a manner detrimental to the public interests.

In regard to the financial condition of the city, there is some difficulty in presenting a clear and perfect statement, from the fact that the commencement of the Municipal and Financial years are at different periods. In addition to this, it should be remembered that the cost of many important works, initiated and authorized by one administration, has to be met in a great degree by a succeeding government.

If we should take an account of stock like a private individual, appraising our property at its real value, its cost, and offsetting that by our debts, it would be found that there was a handsome balance remaining. The apprehensions of the most timid as to our solvency would be quieted ; and we should exhibit as sound a condition in regard to our financial affairs as any municipality in the world. To be sure, we owe a large debt ; but we have something real and tangible for it. The money has not been squandered like the spendthrift's, or sunk in the sea like an unfortunate mercantile venture.

Our water-works, school-houses, and public buildings of all descriptions, have an intrinsic value in themselves. They are necessary for carrying out the very purposes for which our government was established ; but as they are permanent in their character, for posterity as well as ourselves, it is unjust that the present generation alone should be taxed for their cost.

The public lands, if properly managed, will long be a source of revenue. They are of value to us even after we have parted with them, and the proceeds placed in the Treasury. Although we may lose our title to them as a part of the public domain, yet they become of enhanced importance, as the new proprietors will furnish a larger amount of taxable property from which we can draw the means for the support of government.

The following statement, prepared at the Auditor's office, shows our financial condition this day : —

The City Debt (<i>exclusive of the Water Debt</i>) at the beginning	
of the present financial year, 1st of May last, as reported	
by the Auditor, was	\$2,227,338 66
The Water Debt at the same time was	\$5,031,961 11
	<hr/>
Total,	\$7,259,299 77

Since that time there has been charged off on the Auditor's books as follows :

Payments on the City Debt,	\$17,500	
Payments on the Water Debt,	31,000	
	<hr/>	48,500 00
<i>Amount carried forward,</i>		<hr/> \$7,210,799 77

<i>Amount brought forward,</i>	\$7,210,799 77
And there has been added <i>Funded Loans</i> to the amount of	756,700 00
Making the total of Funded Debt at this time,	<u>\$7,967,499 77</u>
<i>To this amount should be added</i> payments made and to be made on loans authorized, <i>but not yet negotiated</i> , estimated at	455,500 00
Making a total consolidated funded and unfunded Debt of	<u><u>\$8,422,999 77</u></u>
Of which the Debt of the City proper amounts to	\$3,421,038 66
And the Water Debt to	5,001,961 11
	<u><u>\$8,422,999 77</u></u>

The means of payment are :

Balance to the credit of the Committee on the Reduction of the Debt, on the 1st of May last, deducting the payments on the Debt since that time,	\$465,753 29
Cash received since that date on account of sales of Public Lands, and on Bonds and Mortgages,	134,947 24
Do. from this year's Taxes, being the amount specially appropriated for this object,	80,000 00
	<u>\$680,700 53</u>
Bonds and Mortgages,	553,162 29
	<u><u>\$1,233,862 82</u></u>
Gross Debt, as above stated,	\$8,422,999 77
Means of Payment,	<u>1,233,862 82</u>
Net Debt at this time, (2d January, 1858,)	<u><u>\$7,189,136 95</u></u>
Of which the Water Debt is	\$5,001,961 11
Balance,	<u>2,187,175 84</u>
	<u><u>\$7,189,136 95</u></u>

I have already, gentlemen, taken up more time than I intended in presenting for your consideration those suggestions which I supposed might be pertinent to this place and occasion. As opportunities occur, or as I become more conversant with our affairs, it will be my pleasure, as it is my duty under the charter, "to communicate such information, and recommend such measures, as may tend to the improvement of the finances, the police, health, security, cleanliness, comfort and ornament of the city."

While to you belongs the legislative department, the enactment of wise laws, the selection of many of the most important ministerial officers of the government, the raising of the public money, and its appropriation to legitimate purposes, it is my charge, as the chief executive officer, "to be vigilant and active at all times in causing the laws to be duly executed and put in force, to inspect the conduct of all subordinate officers, and, as far as it may be in my power, to cause all negligence, carelessness and positive violation of duty to be duly prosecuted and punished."

We enter upon our duties at an epoch in the history of the city which demands for its rulers the strenuous endeavors and the most patriotic devotion of its best men. It may be that we are not equal to this trust, and that our citizens will be disappointed in their expectations; but one thing is certain, that we have the power to consecrate such abilities as we do possess to

its service, and to leave the government to our successors with clean hands, and consciences void of offence.

While faithful in all public matters, let us see to it that our own private walk and conversation be such as to excite to emulation. Let us not be false to the high position in which we have been placed as the guardians of the public morals, and the exponents of correct principles. The oaths we have now taken have not only been entered upon our journals and witnessed by this assembly, but are recorded on high. We have solemnly invoked the presence of the Supreme Ruler to hold us accountable for the purity of our motives, and the spirit which shall govern our acts. Let the hallowing influence of this service extend through all our deliberations, and in every path of official duty, so that if we should fail to receive the applause of our fellow-men, we may receive the approbation of our God.

